

'The Armageddon Factor' offers the challenge of both Romana I and the original of Romana II in the same story.

Let's start with the relationship between Princess Astra and Surgeon Merak. He's in love with her, so we can't expect him to be too happy about her habit of exposing herself to danger. In Part Four he rescues her from the Shadow and on TV, she abandons him before they reach the TARDIS, but in my version they both make it. He proceeds to lecture her about taking care of her own safety. Astra is haughty, so Merak loses his patience and snaps, 'Sometimes I would like to put you across my knee.' Astra is still haughty: 'You can't do that, I'm a princess of the royal house of Atrios.' Merak is cowed (I think he's an easily cowed character). 'But I'm not from Atrios,' says the Doctor, 'and you're not in your royal palace, your majesty, you're in my TARDIS.' He then proceeds to spank Astra in front of Merak and Romana - fairly gently, because, as a princess, she has probably never suffered the like before, and the humiliation of having others present will be punishment enough.

Several things about this incident lodge in Romana's unconscious mind. Firstly, Astra was able to refuse a spanking from her boyfriend and get away with it - if the Doctor hadn't intervened. In a similar situation she'd definitely like to be able to cow the Doctor like that. Then there's the fact that her spanking from the Doctor was much less severe than the ones Romana herself is used to getting...

The end of the story just goes to prove the point that Astra can get away with more than she can. When the Doctor fits the Randomizer and Romana lets out her tirade about the Doctor's irresponsibility, he becomes angry: it's time she was spanked. Romana's attempt to cow him as Astra did Merak fails dismally: it annoys the Doctor so much that he not only lifts her skirt but takes down her panties for an extra-severe spanking.

Facedown on her bed that night, Romana muses on two things. Wouldn't it be nice to be more like Astra? And wasn't there something just a little bit sexy about being spanked on her bare bottom?